

# COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT REFORM

TOM DAVIS, CHAIRMAN



## **NEWS RELEASE**

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### **Davis Encourages TSA to Grant More Flexibility to Pilot Program Airports**

**Washington, D.C. – Chairman Tom Davis issued the following statement today on the release of the BearingPoint study evaluating Private Screening Operations:**

“As the chairman of the Government Reform Committee, I am thankful to have the BearingPoint study to help us continue to oversee the development of the Transportation Security Administration and determining what the federal government’s ultimate role in managing airport security around the nation.

“Safety is paramount, and I was pleased to see that all five of the pilot program airports met or exceeded the standards for screening mandated under the Aviation and Transportation Security Act.”

“My Committee held a hearing on November 20, 2003 to examine passenger screener training and testing. At that time, representatives from two of the five pilot program airports testified about their lack of management flexibilities, which they felt was prohibiting them from testing out new procedures that could lead to a better and more efficient security system.

“This same lack of flexibility is cited in the BearingPoint report. Because the pilot program airports have to mirror so many of the Transportation Security Administration’s practices, as the report notes, ‘the design of the private screening program severely limits the opportunity for differences in the two models.’ Where different practices are allowed, BearingPoint found several advantages in the private screening models.

“I strongly encourage the TSA to allow the pilot program airports more management flexibilities, so that we can have a more clear understanding of the

differences between public and private screening. Certainly the intent of Congress under ATSA was to allow contract screener companies to leverage their creativity and flexibility to produce management strategies that would create cost-savings to airports without reducing passenger security. In addition, each airport has a unique facilities design, labor market, and security interest. It is important that TSA allow flexibilities to allow local managers to address airport-unique concerns.

“In addition, as the TSA develops the guidelines and criteria for airports to consider opting out of the federal screener workforce, this Committee will continue to monitor the process to ensure the safety of air travel.”

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